



Rogers Lake Project Briefing Paper

April 2009

Project Vision

Coconino County envisions a large, protected wetland landscape that supports incomparable opportunities for outdoor education and research, watchable wildlife programs, interpretation of historic and prehistoric sites, and low-impact recreation.

Location

Rogers Lake watershed is located 10 miles southwest of Flagstaff. It is accessed by Woody Mountain Road and Forest System road #231. It covers portions of Sections 31 and 32 in T21N R6E; and Sections 4, 5, and 6 in T20N R6E.

Conservation Values

- Wildlife diversity and vegetation communities characteristic of an ephemeral wetland;
- Important habitat for bald eagles, waterfowl, and wading birds; potential habitat for Mexican spotted owl, Navajo mountain vole, Northern leopard frog, and other sensitive species; critical migration corridor for pronghorn, mule deer, turkey, elk, and black bear;
- Valuable prehistoric sites and scatter areas dating back 5,000 years in addition to old railroad beds and log structures from Flagstaff's sheep herding and logging era;
- Striking vistas of the iconic San Francisco Peak as well as Woody Mountain.

Acquisition Package

The County seeks to acquire land for conservation from Arizona State Land Department (ASLD) using a public auction sale. The core project covers 1337 acres of ephemeral wetland. If funding is available, an additional 960 acres of upland buffer will be acquired from the Trust. The project also seeks conservation easements from two adjacent private ranches.

Background

Coconino County voters approved the acquisition of Rogers Lake in 2002, as part of the Coconino Parks and Open Space ballot initiative. One-eighth of a cent sales tax is collected for approximately ten years until \$33 million accumulates. Proceeds are used to acquire up to seven natural areas, the most critical of which is Rogers Lake. County efforts to acquire Trust land at Rogers Lake stalled out when ASLD vacated the implementation of the Arizona Preserve Initiative. Recently, City of Phoenix successfully purchased Trust land at auction for its Sonoran Desert Preserve. Coconino County understands that auction is a competitive bidding format. However, it is important to implement the goals for natural area acquisition established by citizens in 2002, if at all possible.

Agency Partners

Arizona Game & Fish Department, National Guard Bureau and Arizona Department of Emergency & Military Affairs (Camp Navajo), Coconino National Forest, and NAU Centennial Forest will assist with acquisition and/or management phases of the project.

Additional Information

Coconino County's amended petition to reclassify Trust lands as suitable for conservation was submitted to ASLD in January 2008. More information is available at www.coconino.az.gov/parks.aspx